



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 223
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From: Commanding Officer, Marine Attack Squadron 223
To: All Hands

Subj: COMMANDER'S GUIDANCE

1. Our mission over the coming year is to prepare for deployments to Afghanistan and in support of the 24th MEU. There are five critical parts to doing this:

a. Training is job one! The only way to get better at our profession is through vigorous OJT and academic study. To fly healthy aircraft, our commitment to training maintainers must equal our commitment to training pilots. The monthly maintenance training plan, therefore, will be just as detailed and well thought out as the monthly pilot training plan. Tech training time is untouchable and will be planned in detail to ensure it is valuable. Tech training is not the venue in which we train Marines to be instructors, but is instead the venue in which the audience is trained in critical aspects of their jobs by fully qualified instructors. When Marines are not actively engaged in the performance of their daily jobs, they are to be training by studying pubs, attending lectures, working their way through lessons, or receiving "hip pocket" classes from more experienced Marines. SNCOs will develop training roadmaps for each of their Marines and proactively ensure they are working or training at all times. Maintenance Marines who achieve advanced qualifications and S-shop Marines who develop advanced skills within their MOS will be rewarded. Because we are a Harrier squadron, we might easily find ourselves based at remote or austere FOBs in Afghanistan, so we must be fit enough to fight and win in "every clime and place." Out of shape warriors are easy prey on the battlefield. If you are out of shape, get in shape. If you are over weight, lose it.

b. FMC is the only way to be. FMC aircraft are an ABSOLUTE requirement to support Marines in Afghanistan, and are therefore an absolute requirement to train like we are going to fight. We will not continue to fly aircraft that lack critical systems such as functional radars or RWR gear, operational TPODs, or working HUD VTRs. Such aircraft will be pulled from the schedule as soon as possible and fixed. To do this we must maximize the amount of "touch time" that our maintainers, the

best in the world, actually spend working on jets each day. We will therefore schedule formations, lectures, safety pauses, ground training, family days, etc in a way that does not detract from our daily maintenance effort. We will aggressively ensure that each Marine is gainfully employed during normal working hours.

c. No open field fumbles. We cannot afford to lose an aircraft or Marine to complacency, negligence, malpractice, or preventable tragedy. All personnel are therefore empowered and expected to stop unsafe acts. Marines who fail to take such action are just as culpable as Marines who commit unsafe or stupid acts. Character and integrity are important! Do the right thing, even when no one is watching. The "five don'ts" in this squadron are: don't lie, don't cheat, don't steal, don't do drugs, and don't disrespect NCOs. When we make mistakes, we will own up to them so that corrective action may be taken and others can learn from the mistake. The honest mistakes we make are never as bad as what we do when we try to cover them up. Attempts to cover up mistakes in order to avoid consequences or embarrassment will be dealt with severely.

d. Balance. Our Marines need personal time to prepare themselves and their families for the squadron's upcoming operational commitments. Time off on the weekends is made possible by meeting our goals during the normal workweek. Therefore, when you are "on the clock," I expect you to be "on the clock," meaning you are focused on the work at hand and helping your shop or division meet its goals for the day. While I want the work place to be enjoyable and full of camaraderie, every minute spent on trivial matters or entertainment during the workday represents lost work time. I expect your best, most efficient effort during the normal work week so that we can all enjoy our weekends.

e. Teamwork. President Harry S. Truman famously said "There is no limit to what a man can accomplish if he does not care who gets the credit." This statement embodies the spirit of teamwork that we are looking for here in VMA-223. Teamwork is unselfish and seeks ways to work together in order to accomplish the mission. Strive to build teams. Average talent and great teamwork will always outperform great talent and average teamwork. We are going to succeed or fail based largely upon how well we operate as a team. We have one year to prepare for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Let's roll.

T. D. GORE